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City Planning: A series of papers presenting the essential elements of a city plan. Edited by JOHN NOLEN. (New York and London: D. Appleton and Company, 1916. Pp. xxvi, 447. National Municipal League Series.)

While the output of books, pamphlets, and periodical articles on city planning has been far from meager during these last few years, the greater number of these publications have been neither comprehensive in their scope nor practical in their suggestions. Mr. Nolen's volume possesses both of these qualities. In addition, it offers itself primarily as a handbook for the layman, for the conscientious citizen who would keep abreast of the times, and it hopes also to be of value to city-planning enthusiasts by its fund of varied and useful information. The book seems to live up to its purpose.

Seventeen experts contribute the eighteen chapters of the book, dealing with as many different phases of the general subject. There is a logical arrangement of topics, progressing from the introduction and a chapter on the general subdivision of land, through a consideration of each of the physical features which affect city life, such as streets, buildings, recreation facilities, water supply, transportation on water and land, rapid transit, and industrial and residential decentralization, to the details for the actual accomplishment of a city plan, the methods for setting to work and for financing it, with a concluding chapter on city-planning legislation in the United States and Canada. The more general chapters in the book are, perhaps, most interesting, as, for example, the introductory chapter by Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, and those on "City Financing and City Planning" by Mr. Flavel Shurtleff and on "City Planning Legislation" by Prof. Charles Mulford Robinson. To those not familiar with city-planning methods Mr. George Burdett Ford's contribution on "Foundation Data for City Planning Work" is especially illuminating and suggestive. Some of the chapters on the more technical phases of the subject will possibly prove less clear to those readers who have not already become acquainted with the general principles and problems of city planning.

In general form the composite volume is excellent and sets a high standard for similar undertakings. To this several features contribute: the progress from one chapter to the next, with its different topic, is natural and easy; the transition from one author to another is not too noticeable; each subject receives to some extent the same general treatment;—in short, the editor's work has been cleverly and carefully done.

There is, possibly, too much attempt at interrelation in the matter of cross-references, etc.; these are skillfully arranged for the most part, but in some portions of the book they occur so frequently as to give an impression of artificiality. Ten pages containing a short biographical notice of each contributor precede the table of contents. There are many interesting illustrations and tables throughout the volume; but a few of these tables—for instance, those in the chapter on “Navigable Waters,” showing tonnage per unit of water and land surface and per unit length of wharf, and length of wharf per thousand population—appear to be of doubtful value in a book which makes its chief appeal to the general reader.

In a coöperative volume some repetition is hardly avoidable; yet three separate explanations of excess condemnation seem over many, besides giving opportunity for discrepancies in statement. A short list of references is appended to each chapter and a ten-page general bibliography concludes the volume. The book has been well printed and the proof reading is exemplary; there are practically no typographical errors save the page reference given in the foot-note on page 401.

A. M. H.

The Law and the Practice of Municipal Home Rule. By HOWARD LEE MCBAIN. (New York: Columbia University Press. Pp. xviii + 724.)

This generous volume represents by far the most complete and comprehensive study of municipal home rule in the United States that has yet appeared, and as such will be welcomed by all students of that interesting and important subject. The book is divided into two unequal parts. Part I, comprising about one-seventh of the book, is concerned with the origin and development of the home rule problem. It gives the history of the constitutional limitations on the power of state legislatures over cities, other than those involved in the grant of charter making powers to cities. This first and less important part of the work contains little that is new, but gives a concise and readable presentation of that phase of the subject.

The second part of the book takes up the situation in the twelve so-called “home-rule” States, that is, those in which cities have been granted the right by constitutional amendment to frame their own charters. The method of treatment is by States, taking each State